Final Draft

Wilmington Town Common Land Use Study

January 1989

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Final Report
WILMINGTON TOWN COMMON LAND USE STUDY

January 1989

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Wilmington Memorial Library
Wilmington, Mass.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY: STRENGTHENING THE TOWN COMMON AREA AS THE CIVIC CENTER OF WILMINGTON

For a number of years, the residents of Wilmington have been concerned with finding ways in which the Town might strengthen its self image by creating a geographic heart for the community. While the Town Common area already fulfills that role to some extent, it does not yet have the resources to completely fill that need. The Town Common Land Use Study was commissioned by the Town to specifically explore two questions.

1. In a general way, what uses and activities might be brought to the Common to make it the civic center of the Town?

2. Can the buildings and land near the Town Common accommodate some specific facilities which are both needed by the Town, and which might contribute to the character of the area?

This Chapter summarizes the findings of the Land Use Study, and addresses the first question by describing some general ways of achieving a density and mix of uses which can provide Wilmington with a strong and identifiable focus of civic activity.

Chapters 2 - 5 address question number two for the following facilities: a Town Hall; recreational and athletic facilities; the expansion of Wildwood Cemetery; and parking for a variety of facilities.

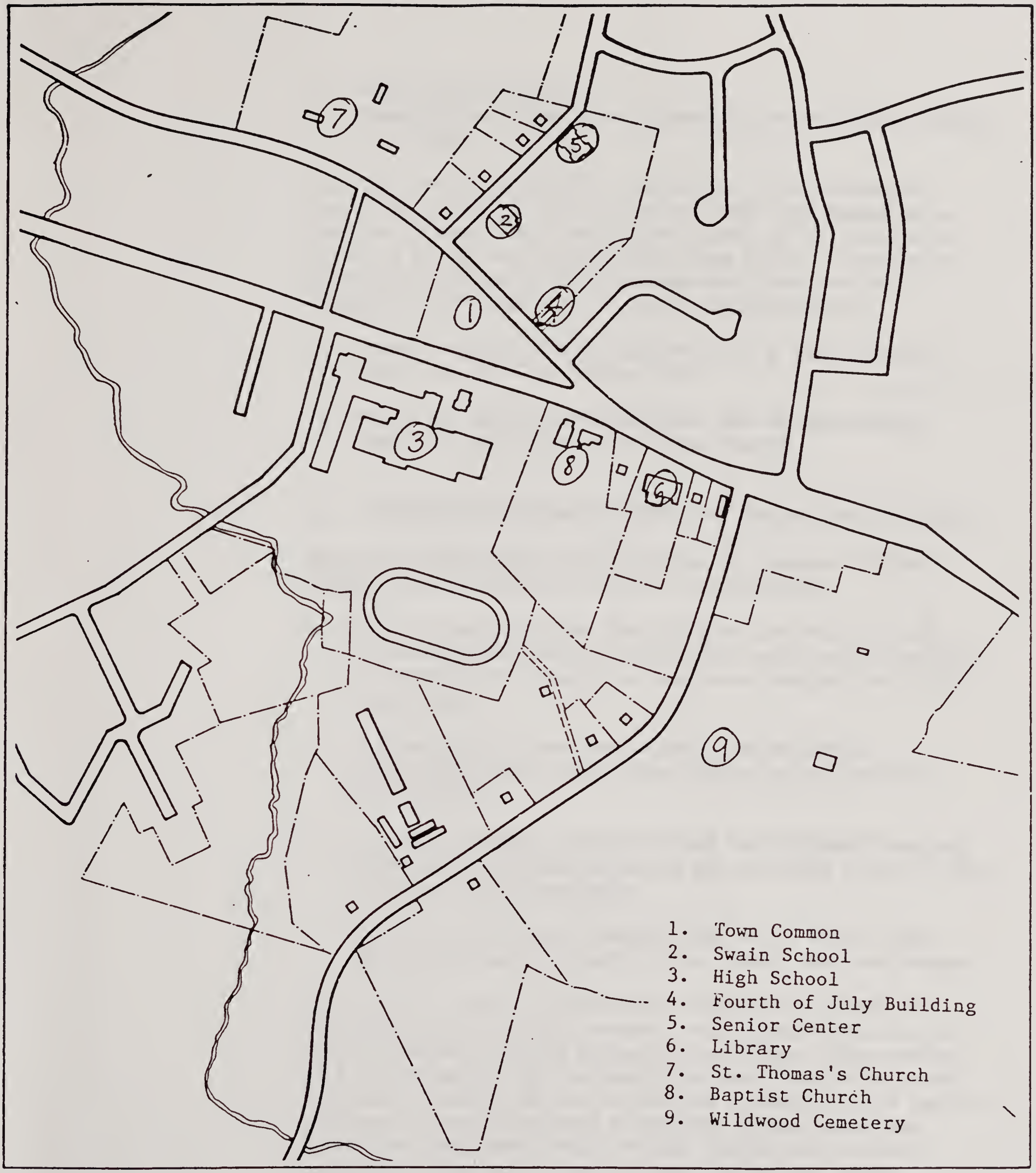
I. EXISTING TOWN COMMON LAND USES AND ACTIVITIES

The Town Common area has many facilities and activities which already form the core of the Town's civic life (see Figure 1). These include the following uses.

- Town Common
- High School
- Library
- 4th of July Building
- Senior Center
- Cemetery
- Churches

Some of the activities which take place near the Common include:

- Annual Town Meeting (at the High School)
- 4th of July Celebrations
- Summer Concerts on the Common



The Town Common Area: Sites Discussed in the Report

Figure 1

- High School athletics
- Community meetings held at many of the buildings around the Common

This list of facilties and activities is an impressive roster of community life. However, the Town Common area does not yet include a sufficient range of activities to create a strong and identifiable Town focus. In order to establish this focus it is recommended that two basic changes in the Town Common area be accomplished.

1. Attract regular daytime activity of a more general nature to the Town Common area.

2. Make more active and consistent use of the outdoor space, in particular the Common itself.

II. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS OF THE TOWN COMMON LAND USE STUDY

There are significant opportunities to enhance the Town Common area as the civic center of Wilmington.

- The relocation of the Town Hall to the Swain School site would add new activity to the area, and bring many of Wilmington's residents into more regular use of the Common area.

- The addition of new recreational and athletic facilities would make greater and more active use of the outdoors.

- The provision of additional land for Wildwood Cemetery would add approximately seven and one-half years to the capacity of the cemetery.

- The consolidation of parking lots would reduce the visual dominance of parked cars around the Town Common.

If the full range of opportunites around the Common are exploited, the area will become a significant resource of civic, recreational and athletic facilities. The creation of a varied mix of recreational/athletic facilities would serve all segments of the Wilmington community, from senior citizens to adult athletes to student competitors; and would draw many more people to the Common than are now attracted. The public land around the Common is not presently used to its full potential, and the development of this area will make appropriate use of an existing public resource.

The study has also included examination of some private lands for future public uses. The Town will need to weigh the benefits and costs of acquiring new land area for public purposes.

The specific facilities which could be added to the Town Common area (and which are discussed in this report) include those in the list below. The numbers also serve as a key to the facilities illustrated on Figure 2.

1. Relocation of the Town Hall and School Administration functions to a renovated and enlarged Swain School Building.

2. Possible reuse of the Roman House for other civic/public functions such as office space for community groups, day care or special academic program space.

3. Landscape enhancement and provision of passive recreation facilities on the Town Common.

4. Development of passive recreation and specialized (senior citizen and handicapped accessible) recreation facilities on the Town Hall (Swain School) site.

5. Creation of a walking trail along the Ipswich River.

6. Use of land behind the Baptist Church and Library for mixed recreational uses including a skating pond and cross country trail.

7. Addition of major new physical education/athletic facilities adjacent to the High School including two or three multi-purpose playing fields, track and field practice areas, and a one-mile cross-country trail.

8. Addition of a small piece of land to the existing High School multi-purpose field.

9. Possible creation of a multi-purpose field on land owned by St. Thomas's Church.

10. Addition of a small piece of property to Wildwood Cemetery.

11. Reorganization of parking in the Town Common area to reduce the quantity of paved area and enhance pedestrian safety.

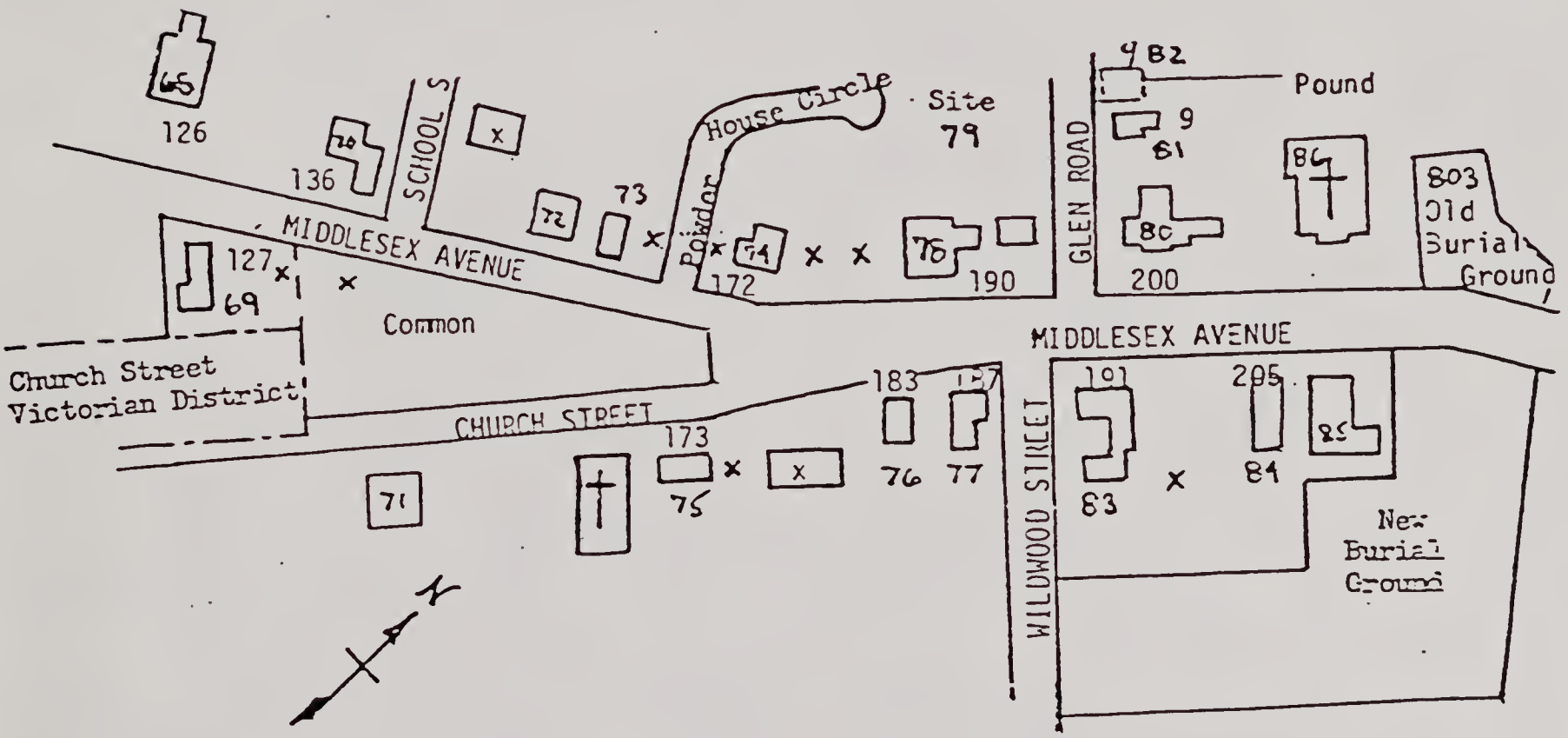
In addition to the specific facilities which the Town should consider for the Town Common area, several more general opportunities for enhancing the Town Common area should also be pursued.

Undertake a visual survey of the area leading to the establishment of design recommendations. These design guidelines might address such issues as landscape improvements, lighting, street furniture, and guidelines for any new buildings which may be developed in the area.

Possible New Facilities in the Town Common Area
Figure 2

Consider carrying out a public relations effort to promote the Town Common as a community civic center. This might include publication of information about the many activities which take place around the Common, a description of the historic role of the area in the Town's life and development, and a solicitation of ideas for future activities which could take place in the area.

Establishing the Town Common area as an Historic District. The "Centre Village", so named by the Massachusetts Historic Commission, has been identified as a possible historic district. An inventory of buildings has already been completed. The area survey prepared by the Commission includes an overview of the historical and architectural importance of the area which is excerpted below. A plan of the Centre Village area is also reproduced below (Figure 3).



General Map of the Area of Wilmington's "Centre Village"

Figure 3

Numbered buildings have been inventoried by the Massachusetts Historical Commission

III OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL IMPORTANCE OF THE TOWN COMMON AREA

The following information has been quoted from the Massachusetts Historical Commission report of the "Centre Village" area of Wilmington.

> "Located near the geographic center of the town, the Centre Village contains some of Wilmington's finest nineteenth century buildings, in addition to the town's first burial ground and an early nineteenth century animal pound. During the eighteenth century, the area seems to have been thinly settled; Wildwood Street, Glen Road, and Church Street, as well as the Wilmington Common, did not exist. While paths may have run east and west from Middlesex Avenue connecting the village with outlying farms, the Centre Village developed largely as a settlement scattered along the Andover and Woburn Road (now Middlesex Avenue). The location of the town's first meeting house and burial ground at the district's north end in the early 1730's established the area as the center of Wilmington's religious and civic life. Surprisingly few families seem to have built homes in the area during the eighteenth century. Of the buildings which remain, only the Nichols House (187 Middlesex Avenue) and the Bond-Skilton House (172 Middlesex Avenue) have sections of clear eighteenth century origin. (A section of the Congregational Church Parsonage, 191 Middlesex Avenue, may date from the eighteenth century.) At least two other houses existed here during this period: one near the site of the present library, and the other near the site of the current Congregational Church.
>
> Between 1800 and 1865 the Centre Village experienced a growth in its population, although the town as a whole grew from 797 inhabitants to a mere 850 inhabitants during this time. It seems likely that a large part of this growth was due to the establishment of bake-houses here by the Bond family. By the mid-century, bake-houses were located north of the former Town Hall, immediately north of the Congregational Parsonage, and on the south side of the Common. In addition to several of the area's most substantial homes (the Bond-Skilton House, the Congregational Parsonage and the Thomas D. Bond House, numbers 172, 191 and 126 Middlesex Avenue, respectively) the Bonds may have built some cottages for their more important employees or for family members (136 and 205 Middlesex Avenue). In addition, a large, rambling house on the south side of the Common was being used as a workers' boarding house in the early 1850's, when it was marked as such on a proposed subdivision plan of the area (prepared for Sanford Adams, on file at the Middlesex County North Registry of Deeds).

During the early nineteenth century, William Blanchard, Jr., perhaps the town's wealthiest citizen, built a formal Federalist style house in the area (200 Middlesex Avenue). In addition, Blanchard gave the town land for a pound (which remains intact) and may have helped to bring commerce to the area, as his position as State Inspector of Hops may have required periodic visits from hops farmers. During this period, stores are known to have existed at the corner of Middlesex Avenue and Glen Road (see 190 Middlesex Avenue) and at the corner of Middlesex Avenue and Wildwood Street (see 183 and 187 Middlesex Avenue). Around 1850, Sanford and Cyrus Adams established a coffin factory on the corner of Middlesex Avenue and Adams Street (see 127 Middlesex Avenue). The growth and diversification of the Centre Village's population prior to 1865 is most readily demonstrated by the construction of the town's first Baptist Church here in 1842 (the former Town Hall) and by the establishment of the Centre School District with its own schoolhouse around 1840 (now the Town Hall Annex).

On February 15, 1864, the Bond Cracker Factory (bake-house), near the former Town Hall, caught fire. Although only the bake-house and the old Congregational Church seem to have been destroyed, the fire seems to have marked a turning point in the development of the Village. The Bond family chose not to rebuild the bake-house, but rather to move much of their business to Boston. It seems likely that the decision was partially due to the location of railroad spurs north and south of the Village, but not in the Village. Although the bakery prospered in Boston and members of the Bond family remained locally prominent, one of the Town's major sources of non-farm employment was removed by the relocation.

During the latter part of the nineteenth century, few buildings were constructed in the area, although the Town's first high school building was built next to the former Centre Schoolhouse on Middlesex Avenue. Between 1875 and 1899, the Town Common came into existence. During the 1890's, Victorian style houses were constructed at 173 Middlesex Avenue and on Church Street (see the Hudson-Roman House). Twentieth century additions to the Centre Village have been built mainly on open lots; only the Public Library required the demolition on an earlier building (a Victorian church).

Remaining in a good state of preservation, buildings in the Centre Village deserve both recognition and protection as the Town's major center of development during much of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries."

CHAPTER 2
TOWN HALL

As discussed in Chapter 1, a primary purpose of the Town Common Land Use Study has been to develop a plan to further the development of the Town Common area as a civic center for Wilmington. A community's Town Hall is one of the key elements of civic activity and focus. Wilmington is considering the development of a new Town Hall because the present location is not central to the Town, and does not create a sense of community for Wilmington. The two possible locations for a new Town Hall which have been suggested over the years are the Town Common area and the Town Center area (intersection of Routes 129/38 and 62).

In the most recent comprehensive plan for the Town, Report for the Wilmington Planning Board, Comprehensive General Plan, 1970, the Town Common area, and the Swain School site in particular, are cited as an appropriate location for a new Town Hall. The Town Common area already houses the High School, the Main Library, the 4th of July Building (housing many community activities), and several churches. The Town Common is also a geographically central location in the Town.

In addition to assessing the appropriateness of locating the Town Hall in the Town Common area, this study has addressed the specific feasibility of locating a Town Hall/School Administration Building (TH/SA) on the Swain School site, and of making use of the Swain School as part of a new Town Hall. The following chapter addresses the variety of physical and locational criteria which answer these questions.

I. BASIC SPECIFICATIONS FOR A TOWN HALL

As discussion of developing a new Town Hall began to focus on exactly which Town offices should be located within the building, it became clear that the administrative functions of the School Department are inadeqautely housed at the present time. The School Administration offices are located in Roman House, a converted residence adjacent to the High School, and directly across Route 62 from the Town Common. At the suggestion of the School Department and the Town Manager, it was deemed appropriate to include the School Administrative offices in the assessment of a new Town Hall. The relocation of the Town Hall to the Town Common area would allow the School Administration offices to remain in immediate proximity to the their present location (and therefore to the High School), but to be housed more appropriately in space designed to accommodate office functions. In the body of this report, all references to the Town Hall include both Town Hall and School Administration Building functions.

Departments and Personnel to be Accommodated in the Town Hall

For the purposes of this study, an estimate of the required gross square footage for a new building was developed. If the Town determines to go forward with the project, an architectural program for the building would be developed during a subsequent phase of work (see description of the process below).

As described by the Town Manager and Department Heads, a new Town Hall would house those Town departments and employees who presently occupy the Town Hall on Glen Road, and the School Departments housed in the Roman House located adjacent to the High School.

The offices located in the existing Town Hall include the following:

- Town Manager and adminstration
- Town Clerk
- Planning Board and Conservation Commission
- Recreation Department
- Accounting Department
- Assessor's Office
- Building Inspector
- Board of Health
- Town Nurse
- Town Engineer
- Finance Department
- Employee's Credit Union
- Veterans' Agent
- Central Computer Facility
- Employee Lounge
- Selectmen's Meeting Room
- Large public meeting room (to accommodate up to 100 people)
- Town Vault
- Storage Areas

The School Departments to be accommodated in a new building would be those presently housed in the Roman House, comprised of the Central Office which includes the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent, the School Accountant and administrative staff (a total of eight staff). Other departments which may be consolidated in a new building include Special Education (seven staff), Reading (four staff) and Food Services (three staff).

The number of personnel associated with these Town and School Department offices are as follows:

Existing Town Hall staff	42
School Administration	22
Total	64

It is anticipated that the number of personnel will not increase by any appreciable number over the forseeable future. Therefore, this count can be used as an appropriate estimate of the number of personnel that a new Town Hall would need to accommodate. It should be noted that if a more detailed programming study is undertaken, these numbers will need to be carefully scrutinized.

Required Building Size and Site Area

The Town Manager and Department Heads indicated that the existing facilities are of a reasonably adequate size for their current staff and functions.

Town Hall	20,000 square feet
Roman House	5,000 square feet
Total	25,000 square feet

For the purposes of this study (in order to allow for a modest increase in size and activity) it has been assumed that the gross square footage required for the Town Hall is 30,000 square feet (20% larger than the space presently occupied).

In addition to the building itself, the site for a Town Hall must accommodate adequate parking for staff and visitors. Based on a parking survey of the existing Town Hall, and observations from the School Department, it is estimated that 75 parking spaces will be needed for the Town Hall. In addition, the parking needs of the 4th of July Building will continue to be met on the Swain School site. For regular, weekday activities, no more than 30 spaces are required to meet this need. Using a standard estimate of 300 square feet per car (including circulation space), a total of 31,500 square feet of parking area will be required to accommodate 105 parking spaces.

II. BUILDING AND SITE CRITERIA FOR THE TOWN HALL

Two sets of basic design criteria were used to assess the potential for using the Swain School and its site for a new Town Hall. These are:

1. Internal building requirements and how the reuse of the Swain School conforms to these.

2. Siting of the building on the parcel.

The site and building have been reviewed with respect to these criteria (described in detail below) to insure that the Permanent Building Committee (PBC) and the Town Manager have sufficient information to make a recommendation on whether to proceed with the design of a new Town Hall. Section VII of this chapter describes the design process which would need to be undertaken if the project proceeds into the design stage.

An additional concern which has been briefly addressed as part of this study (Section VI) is the reuse options for the two buildings which would be vacated if a new Town Hall were occupied, these are the Glen Road School and the Roman House.

Building Criteria

The building criteria evaluated during the initial phases of this feasibility study concern the reuse potential of the Swain School.

Operational Criteria

1. Barrier free building - Is it possible to make the Swain School (and any additions) barrier free? (This refers to the need to make all Town offices accessible to the handicapped.)

2. Circulation - Are there adequate options for developing a good circulation system between the Swain School and additions?

Aesthetics

3. Historic Character - Will it be possible to complement and enhance the Swain School's appearance?

4. Massing - Will working with the Swain School pose any particular problems with respect to the visual size of a new Town Hall adjacent to the Town Common?

Cost Effectiveness

5. Will the cost of reusing the Swain School be greater or less than constructing an entirely new building?

6. Are the foundation and structure of the Swain School basically sound?

7. Asbestos - Is there asbestos or any other toxic material in the building?

Site Criteria

Site criteria can be roughly separated into three basic areas of concern: 1 - Physical suitability of a site for its proposed use; 2 - Relationship between the proposed land use and existing adjacent land uses; and 3 - Availability of the site.

Physical Suitability

8. Is the site large enough to accommodate the building and the parking area needed for the Town Hall?

9. Are there potential environmental problems with the use of the site such as:

   - o Wetlands
   - o Hazardous materials
   - o Presence of prime agricultural land
   - o Historic or archaeological remains

10. Is the site physically suitable for the proposed development with respect to topography and soil conditions?

11. Is the site served by adequate infrastructure including:

   - o Water
   - o Town sewers
   - o Electricity
   - o Telephone

Relationship to Adjacent Land Uses

12. Is a Town Hall compatible with the land uses which surround the Swain School site?

13. Can the traffic generated by the new building be accommodated by the existing roads?

14. Are the activities associated with Town business in reasonable proximity to the site (law offices, real estate offices etc.)?

Availability of the Site

15. Are the site and building available for use?

16. Is the site of reasonable cost for the use?

III. REPORT ON THE CONDITION OF THE SWAIN SCHOOL

The Swain School was built in 1914. The Building has 11,728 square feet of space on two floors, and a 5,864 square foot basement (half a level below grade).

A walk-through inspection of the building was carried out to determine the suitability of reusing the structure as part of a new Town Hall.

General exterior description and conditions

The Swain School is a three story building, with an exterior brick bearing wall structure, interior wood-stud bearing walls, wood floor framing, concrete foundations and wood roof joists. The roof has a tar and gravel surface. The exterior walls are exposed brick with wood windows. A terra cotta belt course is located at the first floor line, and at the roof line. Concrete coping stones top the walls.

The building entrances are a half level up from grade. The entrance stairs are concrete with brick sidewalls, capped with concrete cap stones.

The building exhibited few signs of structural distress. The exterior walls are basically sound and intact. Some repointing of the face brick is necessary under brick window sills, although the building does not appear to need general repointing. The windows are "Kalwall" panel with a single hopper operator per window. While in serviceable condition, if the building were redeveloped as a Town Hall, the extent of renovations are likely to include the new windows. Most exterior openings are supported through the use of brick arches. The few remaining openings use steel lintels which are in good condition. The exterior doors are original and need replacement.

Immediate requirements for repair

Frost action has caused substantial damage to two areas of the building; the exterior concrete stairs and the roof parapet.

The exterior concrete stairs and sidewalls exhibit pronounced cracking due to the lifting action of frost. They must be replaced.

The roof system has failed. The base flashing has pulled away from the concrete coping stones allowing water to penetrate into the brick below. Frost action has lifted up and pushed out substantial areas of the parapet brickwork. The condition requires complete rebuilding of the parapet brick work and coping stones. Immediate action should be taken to stabilize this condition before winter. Membrane roofing nailed to the coping stone joints will "counter flash" the base flashing and seal the worst of the leaks. Water testing of the remaining roof, and application of roofing cement, will plug any remaining leaks.

Interior conditions

The building interior exhibits all of the signs of a well used school of this vintage. The walls and ceilings are plaster on wood framing. The floors are vinyl tile on plywood underlayment over the existing wood flooring. Wood

joints support the floors. In general, it is anticipated that the interior finishes will be completely renewed as part of any major renovation.

The mechanical systems need replacement. The heating system is steam and uses a coal boiler that has been converted to oil. The original radiators and gravity oil shafts are still operational. The plumbing does not conform to current codes and must be replaced. The electrical systems have been upgraded but will not easily adapt to new wall locations.

The basement suffers from regular (although infrequent) flooding. This condition would require permanent improvement if the building is to be brought back into regular use. The solution for this problem is likely to require a moderate investment.

Layout and interior spaces

The simple central corridor layout of the School is one which lends itself well to renovation. With stairways at either end of the building, good access is provided between the first and second floors.

The basement of the building is only one-half story below grade, and large windows provide the basement with substantial natural light. With appropriate soundproofing and interior finishes, the gymnasium in the basement may be very useable as a large meeting hall.

Summary

The Swain School appears to be in generally sound physical condition, and to lend itself well to reuse as a Town Hall. While a detailed inspection of the building should be carried out once a decision has been made to proceed with the project (particularly of the wet basement issue), it seems clear that the Swain School is a positive resource for the Town to make use of.

IV. BUILDING AND SITE CRITERIA EVALUATION

Operational Criteria

1. Barrier free building

   With the addition of a new wing it would be relatively straightforward to provide elevator access to all the floors of the building.

2. Circulation

   The building is quite adaptable to connection with a new structure.

Aesthetics

3. Historic Character

The Swain School is a relatively simple early twentieth century building. The simplicity of the building lends itself well to the addition of a new wing.

4. Massing

The site of the school is of adequate size to easily accommodate an addition (that would likely be smaller in size than the school itself) that would complement the Town Common area.

Cost Effectiveness of Reuse

5. Reuse of Existing Building

The relatively good condition of the Swain School suggests that a renovation would be a cost effective approach to providing a new Town Hall. Generally, the cost of renovating space (when the structure is in good condition) is lower than that of building entirely new space.

6. Foundation and structure

As described above, the Swain School is a basically sound building.

7. Asbestos

The Town of Wilmington is presently having an asbestos survey prepared for all Town owned buildings, the Swain School will be included in this report. The report will be available from the Public Buildings Department.

Physical Suitability

8. Site size

The site of the Swain School can comfortably accommodate the building and all associated parking.

The Swain School site, excluding the area around the Senior Center, is approximately 200,000 square feet in size. Given the above stated needs for building and parking areas, it is clear that the site is of sufficient size to comfortably accommodate a Town Hall. (In fact the site presently includes a parking lot of approximately 250 spaces, many more than would be needed for the Town Hall.) Chapter 5 addresses the provision of adequate parking for all of the uses in the Town Common area.

9. Environmental Issues

Wetlands - No wetlands exist on the school site.

Hazardous materials - There is no indication that hazardous materials are present on the site. Fuel oil has been used to heat the building for a number of years, and attention will need to be given to the addition or removal of any storage tanks from the property.

Prime agricultural land - The site of the Swain School has been in active use for over seventy years, and therefore is not considered agricultural land.

Historic or archaeological remains - There are no archaeological remains on the site.

The building is within a possible historic district, and has been identified as one which contributes to the historic character of the area. Although it is probably not individually significant, it is important to the district which is probably eligible for the National Register.

If Wilmington plans to use the Swain School and to undertake renovations and/or additions, the Massachusetts Historical Commission should be notified, and the Town should request that the area ("Center Village") be reviewed for eligibility as an historic district. This determination is necessary if State or Federal funds will be used for the project. The State recommends that the process be followed even if State or Federal funds are not used.

Note: In order to keep its records up-to-date, the Massachusetts Historical Commission suggested that the Town inform the Commission that the Curriculum Center (formerly adjacent to the Swain School) has been demolished.

10. Physical suitability

The site is relatively level, and soil conditions are good for building.

11. Infrastructure

Water - The site is adequately served by Town water supplies.

Town sewers - There is presently no Town sewerage in this area. However, the site conditions are favorable to on-site sewerage, as evidenced by a new system recently installed at the adjacent 4th of July

Building, and the fact that the High School uses an on-site sewerage system.

Electricity - There is adequate electrical service in the area.

Telephone - There is adequate telephone service in the area.

Relationship to Adjacent Land Uses

12. Land use compatibility

The Town Common area is the site of many public buildings and activities. This site has in fact been occupied by a public use since 1914, and is an appropriate site for public use to continue.

The uses adjacent to the site include the Town's Senior Center, the 4th of July Building, the Town Common, and a private home. If a Town Hall were developed on the site, some additional public amenities such as passive recreation facilities may be appropriately included in the plans. Such amenities would contribute to the activities which take place around the site (see Chapter 3 for further discussion of these opportunities).

13. Traffic

The Town Hall will not generate a great deal of traffic, and in fact may generate less traffic than the site's present use as a parking lot for High School students. The roads which serve the site are fairly busy Town roads, which have adequate capacity to absorb any traffic generated by the Town Hall.

14. Proximity to other activities

Many of these uses are found in the Town Center area, approximately one mile away. The Town Common area is readily accessible from all of Wilmington, and will provide better proximity to these services than does the present location on Glen Road.

Availability of the Site

15. Site availability

The site is owned by the Town of Wilmington, and is available for use. The basement has recently been leased to Wilmington Community Television, Inc., the local cable television operator. In the event that the building were to be redeveloped as a Town Hall, this occupant would require adequate notice to relocate.

16. Site cost

No site or building acquisition costs would be incurred in the use of this site.

V. EVALUATION OF OPTIONS FOR REUSE OF THE SWAIN SCHOOL

Initial design review of the Swain School suggests that there are two basic strategies for renovation and expansion of the building, with one option which could be explored with each strategy. The basic strategies, and some of the advantages and disadvantages of each are described below.

Lateral expansion of the building - Building addition constructed parallel to Middlesex Avenue. Two basic options are available for lateral expansion, these are illustrated in Figure 4.

Advantages

- o An efficient space layout can be accomplished.
- o Most of the offices would be on the perimeter of the building and would therefore have natural light and ventilation.

Disadvantages

- o A larger building perimeter can be translated into somewhat higher construction and operating costs.
- o The aesthetics of the existing Swain School facade could be compromised with a major addition.

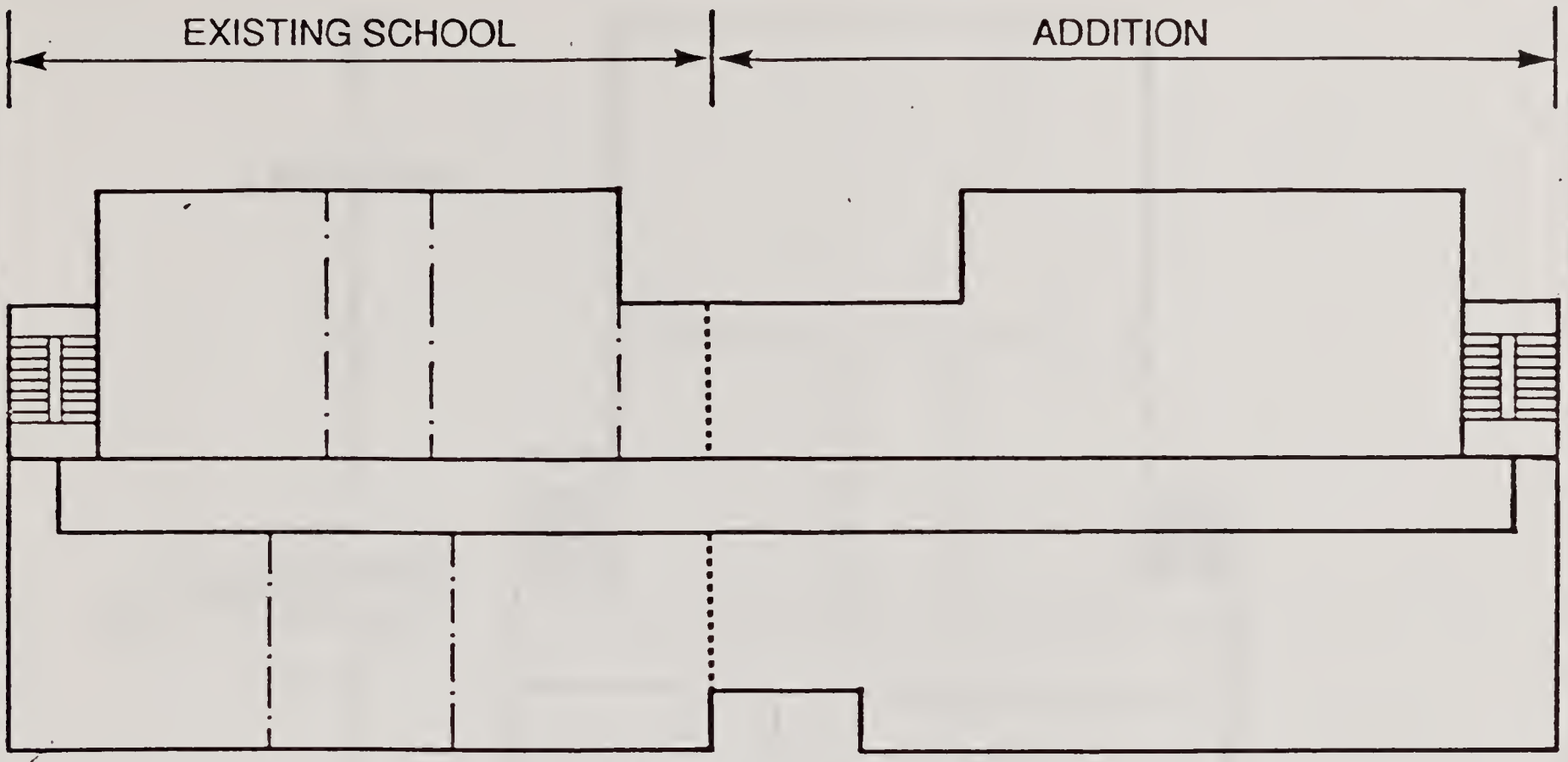
Addition to the rear of the building - Building addition constructed in the area between the existing building and the hill which rises toward the Senior Center (see Figure 5).

Advantages

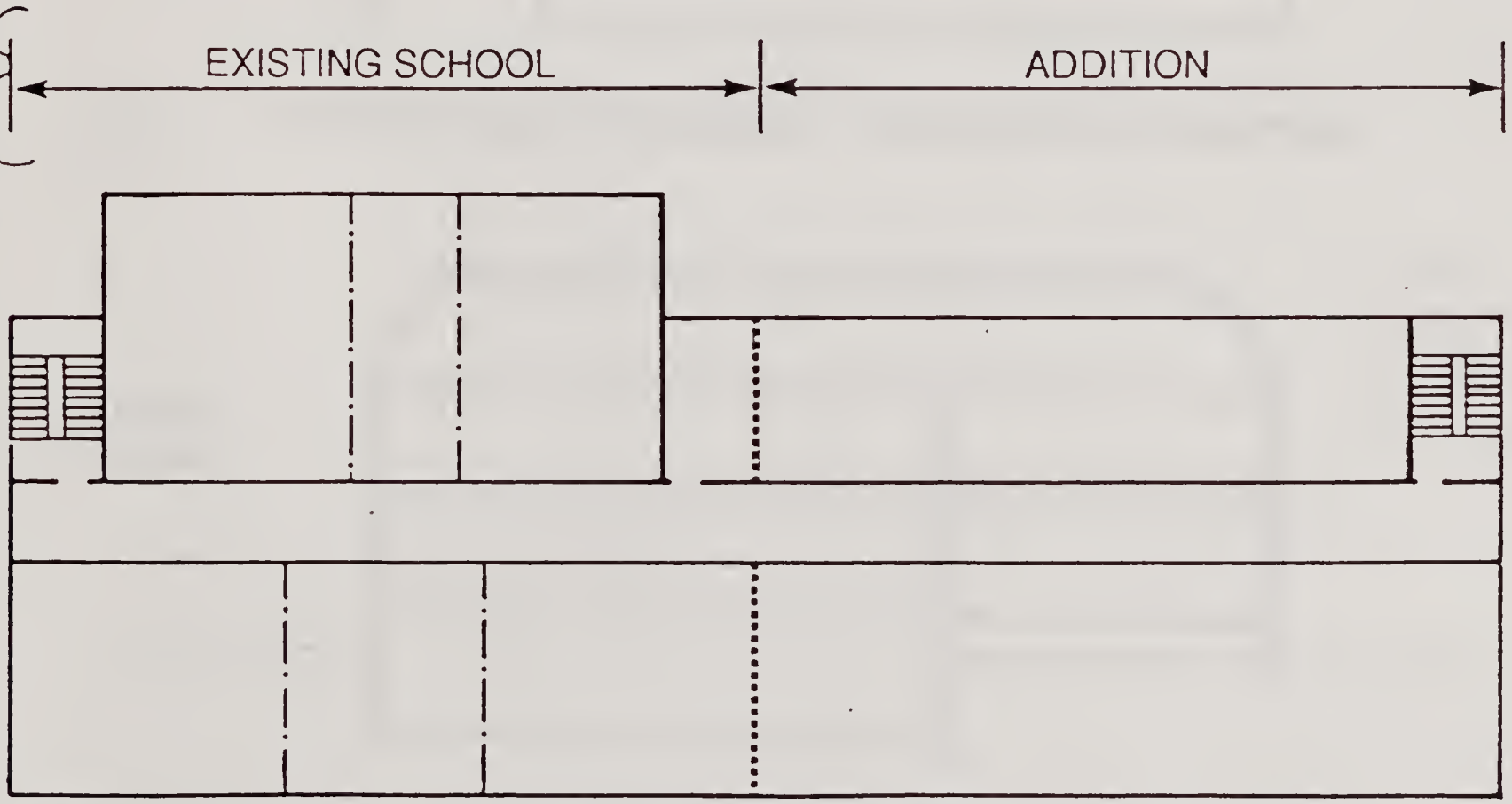
- o The aesthetics of the building as viewed from Middlesex Avenue and the Town Common would not be significantly changed. With the addition of a pitched roof the aesthetics could be enhanced.
- o A smaller building perimeter can be translated into somewhat lower construction and operating costs.

Disadvantages

- o The building layout would be such that some interior offices without windows would be created.



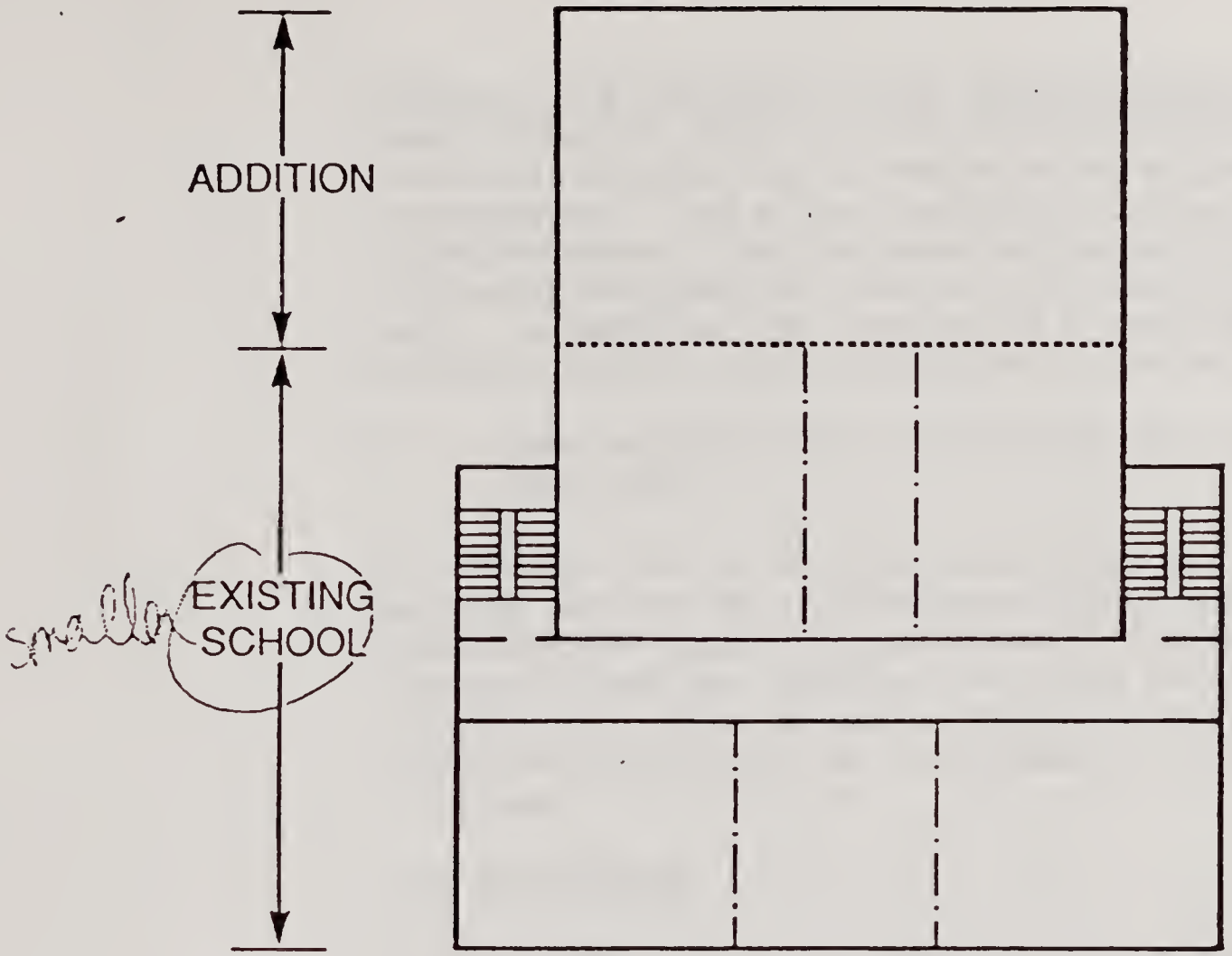
Option A: 2 STOREY LATERAL EXPANSION



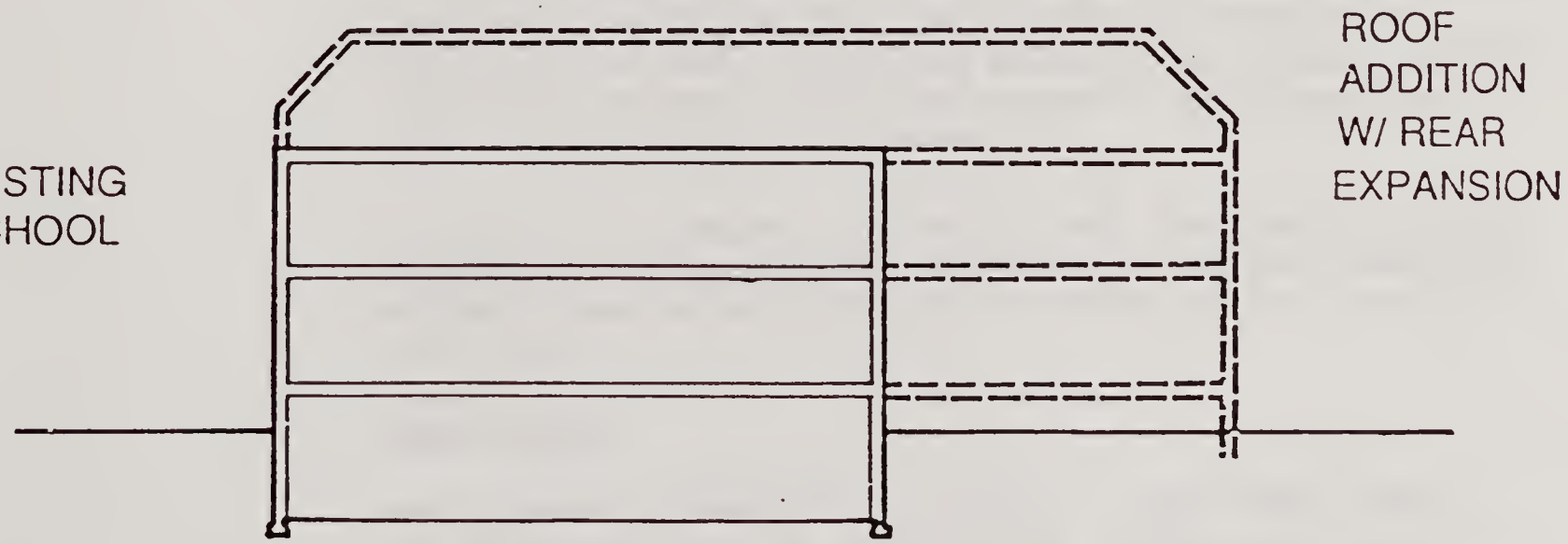
Option B: 3 STOREY LATERAL EXPANSION (INCLUDING BASEMENT)

Options for Lateral Expansion of the Swain School

Figure 4



larger 3 STOREY REAR EXPANSION - 1 STOREY ROOF ADDITION



SCHEMATIC BUILDING SECTION

Option for Rear Expansion of the Swain School

Figure 5

Addition of a new floor on top of the existing building - Under either of these two schemes, the construction of an additional floor on top of the existing building should be investigated. From a cost standpoint this may be an effective means of adding space to the building, while also addressing the pressing need for replacing the existing roof. In addition, the creation of a pitched roof for the structure may be a very attractive design solution.

VI. REUSE POSSIBILITIES FOR THE GLEN ROAD SCHOOL AND ROMAN HOUSE

In the event that a new Town Hall were built to replace the existing facility in the Glen Road School and the school administration functions now housed in The Roman House, the Town would have two buildings available for reuse. The question this poses is whether there are facilities or activities which would be well housed by either of these buildings.

Glen Road School

The Glen Road School is presently occupied by the Town Hall. Built in 1958, the School has 20,000 square feet of building area on one floor. The School is in sound physical condition.

The School Department has indicated that school enrollments are rising rapidly in the lower grades of Wilmington's Elementary Schools. The first priority for use of the Glen Road School would be its reactivation as an elementary school if such space was needed.

The site of the School is heavily used for Town recreation programs. One use for the School which has been mentioned several times is as a recreation center for the youth of the Town.

Roman House

Roman House is immediately adjacent to the High School. The House was built in 1900 and has 4,498 square feet on two floors, and a 1,496 square foot basement. The building is in good condition and is regularly maintained.

As a small building, originally constructed as a private dwelling, the house might be considered for such uses as a day care center, small offices for community groups, or special program space for the High School. The need for any of these activities, and the appropriateness of Roman House for their accommodation should be the subject of further investigation.

VII. DESIGN PROCESS FOR A NEW TOWN HALL

If the Town determines that it will proceed with development of a new Town Hall, the design process would include major elements which are beyond the scope of this initial study. These elements are as follows.

1. Detailed documentation of the existing condition of the building site and all existing structures including building utilities, grades, natural features and site vegetation, and subsurface soil conditions. This documentation would need to be of sufficient detail to allow the architects and engineers who design the project to determine exactly those components of the building and site which would need replacement, modification or removal.

2. Documentation of the space program for the project comprising a detailed description in net square feet of all necessary requirements for people, their furnishings and equipment and all necessary adjacencies between the different components. The program would also include all service, mechanical, and lavatory area net space requirements. Based on these components, circulation space requirements would be calculated to determine the estimated total net and gross project areas.

3. The site and space program information will define the basic project criteria. Based on this information the project designers will develop a schematic design for the proposed project. This normally includes basic project-spatial organization, reuse of any existing building area and relation of any existing and new buildings, building materials, and site planning. At the completion of the schematic design, the design team will prepare an estimate of the cost of construction The client may then review the project based on their financial abilities in relation to the project and make any and all necessary adjustments in the proposed project size and scope. At this point the client will ususally obtain project funding prior to the initiation of the final design and construction documents phase.

VIII. RECOMMENDATION

The Swain School site and building are well suited to use for a new Town Hall. It is recommended that the Town continue to investigate this use.

CHAPTER 3

RECREATIONAL AND ATHLETIC FACILITY NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE TOWN COMMON AREA

Recreation and athletic facilities have both similar and disparate characteristics and can be described in a variety of ways. In the context of this report they will be defined in the following manner:

Recreational Facilities - Passive or active facilities serving the general population of Wilmington.

Athletic Facilities - Facilities for active sports, constructed primarily to serve High School physical education and athletic programs (although also available to the residents of Wilmington at times when not in use by the High School).

I. RECREATIONAL NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Town Common area is being developed as the Civic Center of Wilmington. Within that context a number of townwide recreational needs can be well served by providing facilities near the Common. At the present, the recreational opportunities which exist in the immediate vicinity of the Common are focussed on informal use and programmed activities on the Common. The programmed uses include the annual 4th of July Celebrations, evening concerts in the summer, summer flea markets on the Common, weddings in the gazebo and holiday season lighting of the Common.

A variety of potential user groups for recreational facilities are located in close proximity to the Common. Most important among these are the following:

- Senior Citizens - The Senior Center is located directly behind the Swain School and Senior Lunch Programs are operated in the High School.

- Handicapped Persons - The 4th of July Building houses programs which serve the needs of this group.

- Town employees - Employees of the School Department and the Library are presently in the area, Town Hall employees may be there in the future.

- Wilmington Residents - The Town Common area is centrally located, has a handsome appearance and attracts Wilmington residents to jog and walk, and to make use of High School facilities.

Each of these groups could be better served with the addition of some specific recreational facilties in the vicinity of the Town Common.

The 1987 Open Space and Recreation Plan adopted by the Town notes several specific goals and objectives which are particularly relevant to the Town Common area. These are quoted below.

> "Develop a greenway system along waterways and wetlands to improve wildlife habitats, to promote water quality, and, where possible, for recreational purposes." (page 22)
>
> "Design and construct a boardwalk trail through a wetland area for hiking and birdwatching. Provide interpretive materials describing the wetlands attributes and functions." (page 24)
>
> "Develop and maintain trail systems, picnic areas and educational aids on town owned land, especially the town forest property." (page 25)
>
> "Continue to develop park and recreation facilities and programs for persons with special needs and senior citizens." (page 26)

Four areas which could accommodate new recreational facilities have been identified in the Town Common area. These are the Town Common itself, the Swain School site (in conjunction with development of a new Town Hall), the wetlands around the Ipswich River, and the land lying behind the Baptist Church and the Library (see Figure 6). Each of these are described below. Some of the specific recreational needs could be met in more than one of these sites. However, from a financial and operational standpoint, it would only make sense to develop any particular facility on only one site. The Town will need to carefully schedule and budget their recreational investments in order to determine which facilities should be developed on which site.

The Town Common - The Common is actively used at several specific times of the year for scheduled activities. Otherwise it is not heavily utilized. Recent improvements to the Common including the planting of new trees and the installation of historic-style lighting indicate that there is interest and concern with enhancing the Common as a public open space. Specific additions to the Common which could be considered include the following items.

- Picnic tables and benches - These would serve the Senior Citizens who have programs in the area, as well as Town employees and others.

Areas Which Could Accommodate New Recreational Facilities
Figure 6

- Band Shell - A band shell (or other relatively permanent performance stage) might be considered to encourage active use of the Common.

- Planting programs - Formal gardening activities supervised by the Town's Department of Public Works, and jointly carried out by Senior Citizens, high school students, handicapped persons and Town employees might add to the beauty of the Common and create a stronger sense of identity and community focus for the Common.

The Swain School site - If a new Town Hall is developed on this site, there will be ample open space on the site to also develop recreational facilities for employees, Senior Citizens and the handicapped, all of whom would be in very close proximity to the site.

- Picnic tables and benches - These would serve the Senior Citizens who have programs in the area, as well as Town employees and others.

- Recreational/Athletic facilities designed for Senior Citizens or Special Needs population - The particular needs of special needs populations can be well served through the design of appropriate recreational and outdoor activity areas. Some of the facilities which could be well accommodated on this site include:

    - Seating which is designed to be comfortable and safe for persons with impaired mobility.
    - Tables which allow outdoor socializing and are designed to be of appropriate size, can accommodate wheelchairs, have a mix of sun and shade, and are wind sheltered.
    - Raised planters for gardening
    - Walkways which have been designed to enhance visual, tactual and acoustical stimulation.

Wetlands Areas in the Ipswich River basin - The land adjacent to the High School playing fields lies along the Ipswich River. While this area would not be available for either development or active athletic facilities, it may be a very appropriate site for walking/jogging/cross country ski trails. As discussed by the Conservation Commission and the High School Athletic Director, a trail of two and one-half to three miles would serve a broad range of needs. The users of such a facility would cover the gamut of Wilmington residents, from the High School cross country team, to active runners and skiiers, to the elderly seeking quiet walking paths. The proximity of such facilities to the Common and the High School would place them within convenient access to this wide range of users.

Area Behind the Baptist Church and Library - This area is primarily wetland, and includes both publicly and privately owned land. A small pond exists on the site, and over the years the Town has discussed landscaping the pond and making it available for skating. With this as a primary use, the entire area could be cleaned up and woodland paths (connecting to the Ipswich River trails) could be developed. If the full range of recreation and athletic facilities discussed in this report are developed, this area will be an important link in the system of open space in the Town Common area.

High School Athletic Facilities - Many of the High School's facilities are already used by the general population of Wilmington. This joint use should continue, and any new athletic facilities built to serve the High School should give special design and programming attention to their wider use by Wilmington residents.

II. ATHLETIC NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The athletic facilities at the High School are of insufficient size and number to serve the needs of the school. As a result of overuse, the fields are also difficult to maintain or, in some cases, in poor physical condition. The information in this report about the use, conditions and needs for athletic and physical education facilities was provided by Jim Gillis, Director of Physical Education and Athletics for the Wilmington Public Schools; Ron Swasey, Director of Recreation for Wilmington and; Bob Palmer, Superintendent of Public Works for Wilmington.

Existing Conditions at the High School

There are three fields at the High School: Alumni Field (within the running track), the recently renovated Baseball Field and one multi-purpose field (lying between the track and the parking lot). The use characteristics of each field are described below.

Alumni Field

Existing Use - Physical education 35 classes/week (7 classes/day; 5 days/week). Athletics 5 Games or Team Practices per week. Fall season; 1-2 football games/week, 1-3 field hockey games/week, infrequent after-school practice sessions. Spring season; Track team (four teams) practice or meets every afternoon including running, hurdles, vaults, javelin, discus, high jump etc. Summer and winter the field is not in use for organized activity.

Existing Field Condition - The field cannot be maintained in good condition with its present level of use.

Desired Level of Use - This field should ideally be used for games and not for physical education classes. The addition of lighting would allow the field to be used for additional games, perhaps allowing some teams that now play off-campus to play their games at the High School.

Baseball Field

Existing Use - Physical Education occasional Fall use for archery. Athletics 16-21 games per week. Mid-March through August the field will be used 2-3 times a day (assuming that lights are installed as scheduled). On weekdays one High School use per day and one or two community uses are planned, on weekends three community games are scheduled.

Existing Field Condition - This field has been completely rebuilt with new drainage and irrigation systems. The field is in excellent condition.

Desired Level of Use - The schedule for this field is based on an appropriate amount of use to allow proper maintenance of its excellent condition.

Multi-purpose Field

Existing Use - Physical Education 70 Physical Education classes/week based on 7 classes/day; 5 days/week and the use of the field for two undersized fields. The small size of the field and the need for class area requires that the field be used by two classes at once, this inhibits class activities and requires teachers to limit the number of students on the field at any one time. Thus, students have to "wait their turn" to participate in class activities. Athletics 8 - 12 Team practices per week. Entire school year; 6 band practices/week. Fall season; 5 football practices/week, 1 field hockey practice/ week. Spring season; 7 softball/baseball practices/week, cross country start and finish area.

Existing Field Condition - This field is in very poor condition. Specifically, there are depressions and ruts that are hazardous to running and become puddles and slippery spots when the field is wet. Loose stones are present on the field, and inadequate grass cover yields very dusty conditions during dry weather. With the present level of use it is not possible to maintain the field in reasonable condition.

Desired Level of Use - As a multi-purpose physical education and practice field, this field is expected to withstand greater wear and tear than are game fields, nonetheless, the field should be used for only one class at a time (to allow adequate space for safe play) and should be given some regularly scheduled recovery time for general maintenance.

Cross Country Program

A specific additional concern of the Physical Education Director is the safety of the cross country trail presently used by the cross country team. The trail crosses, and follows, several busy streets. A trail which is less affected by traffic would significantly improve the safety of this activity.

Programmatic Implications of the Existing Number and Condition of Fields

Physical Education - The goal of the Physical Education program is to provide students with the curriculum that is needed for healthy growth and development. With the existing staff, the High School has the potential to offer 100 physical education classes per week, which translates into approximately three classes/week per student. This staffing level is adequate to fulfill the programmatic goal. However, the three fields which exist at the High School cannot adequately serve the range of physical education activities which the Physical Education Department would like to offer.

Because of the limited field space available, it is not presently possible to offer three full classes simultaneously. The outside units include soccer, speedball, hockeyball, lacrosse, track, softball, flag football, and archery. There are on average three classes with about 25 students, for a total of 75 students each period. A typical section (three classes) would include: one unit of flag football, one unit of soccer, and one unit of lacrosse.

Three teaching stations with appropriate area are needed to insure safety. If two classes use the multi-purpose field at the same time, each one must curtail the level of activity and the number of students who are on the field at any one time. Those sports which require larger fields are at a particular disadvantage with the existing conditions.

Also of critical concern is the inability to maintain fields in adequate condition with the level of use which they must presently sustain. Overuse, and inadequate "rest

time" for the fields do not permit a reasonable maintenance program to be carried out. The result is fields which cannot serve the purposes for which they are intended.

Athletics - Many of Wilmington's athletic programs cannot be accommodated at the High School. As the chart below indicates, High School teams presently make use of fields at six other locations in Wilmington.

When students must use fields away from the High School for games or practice a variety of problems must be overcome. These include:

Morale - Students may feel discouraged about participating in sports which cannot be accommodated at the High School, and thus may not receive the kind of support which is available to sports played at the High School. The inconvenience of travelling to and from the School may also discourage students from participating.

Transportation - The School must provide bus transportation to and from the High School, at a cost of approximately $50.00 per one way trip.

Security - Adequate security must be provided for students who are using the facilities during both practice sessions and games.

Locker Rooms and Showers - For many of the students participating in athletics at locations other than the High School there are no shower facilities available, and students must wait until they return to the High School or go home to shower and change.

Equipment - For many activities equipment must be transported for each practice or game, this is inconvenient and time consuming, and increases wear and tear on the equipment.

Personnel - Additional personnel time is required to account for travel time, and in some cases separate security personnel must be hired to cover sites away from the High School. Custodians at other schools must also be paid for extra hours by the High School athletic program budget.

Community Use - There is significant demand for field use by a wide variety of community groups in Wilmington. These include Recreation Department programs, Little League, Senior Little League (6 teams), Pony League - 13-15 year old baseball, Wilmington Recs - 15-18 year old baseball, and Wilmington Astros - Semi-pro Baseball. A number of adult groups affiliated with employers located in Wilmington also seek space for recreational activities.

Neither the Physical Education Director, nor the Recreation Director keep files on those groups who are turned away, both said that many groups could not be accommodated with the existing fields in Town. While some groups are seeking high quality special use fields (particularly adult baseball players), many needs could be accommodated on well maintained multi-purpose fields.

Athletic Program Locations

Sport	# Teams	Participants	Game Site	Practice Site
Football	3	50-75	Alumni Field	High School
Soccer (boys)	2	30-40	North Int.	North Int.
Soccer (girls)	1	20-30	Shawsheen	Shawsheen
Field Hockey	2	30-40	Alumni Field	Glen Rd./Rotary H.S.
X-Country (b-g)	2	25-40	High School	High School
Cheerleading	1	16	High School	High School
Band		50-80	High School	High School
Baseball-V	1	15	High School	High School
Baseball-JV	1	15	North Int.	North Int.
Baseball-FR	1	15	High School	Woburn Street
Softball-V	1	15	Town Park	High School
Softball-JV	1	15	Glen Road	Glen Road
Softball-Fr	1	15	Rotary Park	Glen Road
Track-B *	2	40-50	High School	High School
Track-G *	2	25-40	High School	High School

*Discus, Shot-Put, and Javelin are very dangerous, and need a large area.

Physical Education Facilities Needed at the High School

The athletic facilities which are presently located at Wilmington High School do not adequately serve the existing level of use. Two problems exist. First, there are not enough playing fields to accommodate all the classes and teams which need to use them. Second, the fields are overused and therefore cannot be maintained in the condition which is desired. The addition of athletic facilities in close proximity to the High School would help to alleviate both of these problems.

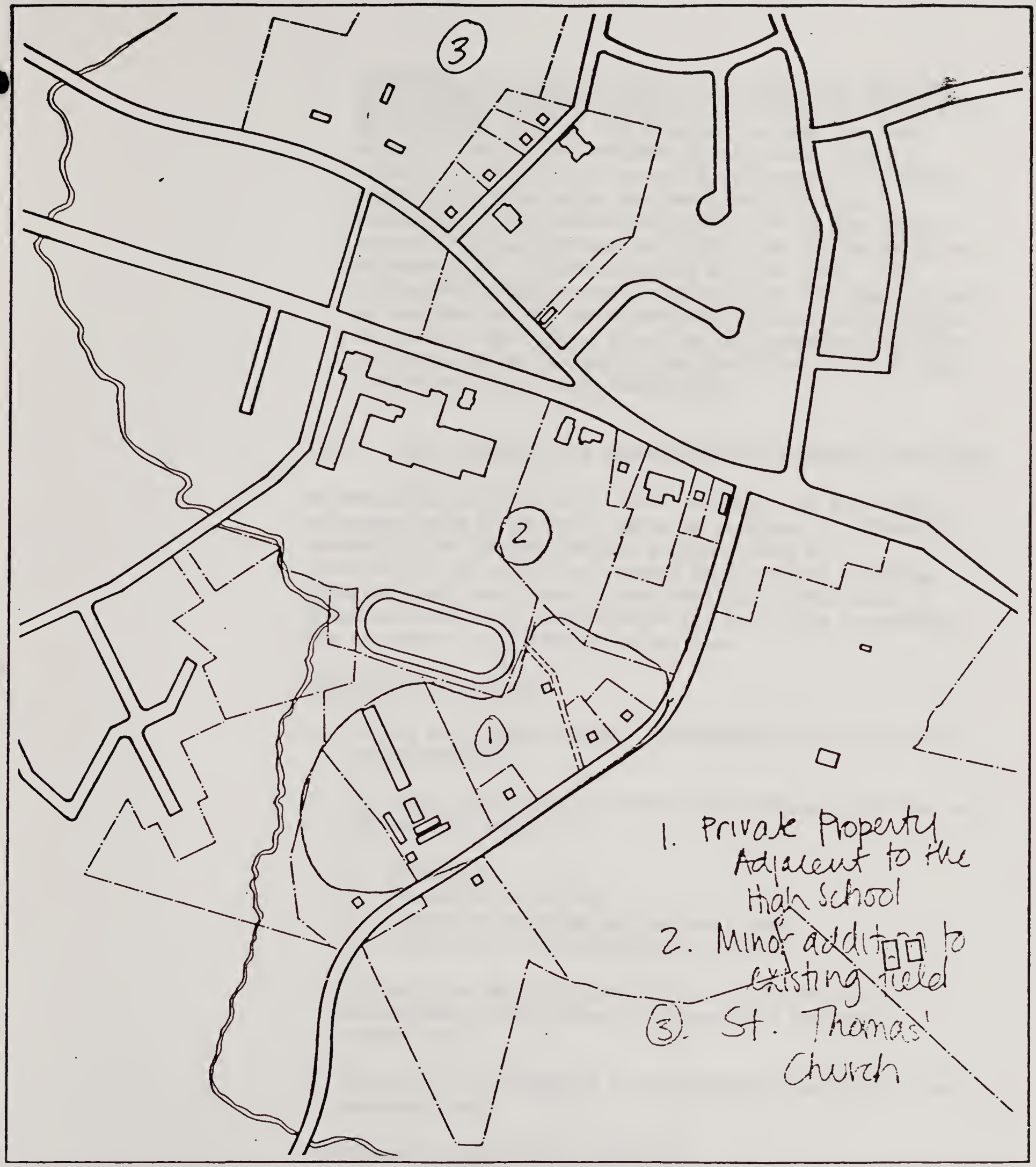
The new facilities needed for the High School physical education and athletic programs are multi-purpose fields which are at a minimum the size of a regulation soccer field. Such fields would serve as the sites for all sports included in the physical education program, could be used for interscholastic soccer competition, and could also serve as practice fields for other field sports.

The dimensions of a regulation field with adequate run-over area are 360 feet by 225 feet. The addition of twenty foot margins beyond the necessary field of play area yields a minimum dimension of 400 feet by 265 feet to accommodate a field. The provision of stands or other facilities would require a larger site.

There are limited opportunities to create new playing fields in the vicinity of the High School. Based on a reconnaissance of sites in the Town Common area, several possibilities have emerged. Each of these have been examined and evaluated and are described below. (See Figure 7.)

1. Addition of new athletic facilities on private property adjacent to the existing fields. Several properties lie between the High School and Wildwood Avenue. In total area this land comprises approximately 15.6 acres. The site is occupied by six private houses, several agricultural buildings, and approximately .7 acres are in agricultural use.

2. Minor addition of land area to the existing fields in order to allow more flexible use of practice areas. The addition of a small area to the existing playing fields which lie between the High School parking area and the track would greatly increase the flexibility of the field. The area in question is owned by the Baptist Church and lies between the property line fence and a small pond. The Town has had the area flagged to mark wetlands, the Town Engineer will provide a measured base plan of the area to enable design and construction cost estimates to be prepared.



Possible Locations for Athletic Facilities
Figure 7

3. Provision of a playing field on a portion of the site owned by St. Thomas's Church. St. Thomas's Church lies on the other side of the Town Common from the High School. The Church occupies a very large site, a portion of which could possibly accommodate a playing field. The area which has been identified as potentially appropriate for such a use is the large open area lying between the Church and the Knight's of Columbus Hall, adjacent to the on-site road. The option which may be worth exploring is the lease or use by the Town of the area in which a soccer field could be constructed. Some joint use arrangements with the Church could be devised. The Church has not yet been approached about this possibility.

III. SITE CRITERIA FOR RECREATION AND ATHLETIC FACILITIES

As described in Chapter 2, site criteria can be roughly separated into three basic areas of concern: 1 - Physical suitability of a site for its proposed use; 2 - Relationship between the proposed land use and existing adjacent land uses; and 3 - Availability of the site. These criteria will be evaluated for each site considered for recreation or athletic facilities.

Physical Suitability

1. Is the site large enough to accommodate the use under consideration?

2. Are there potential environmental problems with the use of the site such as:

   - o Wetlands
   - o Hazardous materials
   - o Presence of prime agricultural land
   - o Historic or archaeological remains

3. Is the site physically suitable for the proposed development with respect to topography and soil conditions?

4. What are the estimated site development costs for the proposed use?

Relationship to Adjacent Land Uses

5. Are recreation or athletic facilities compatible with the land uses which surround the sites?

6. Is the site in reasonable proximity to its potential users?

7. Is there safe access to the site for its potential users?

Availability of the Site

8. Is the site available for use?

9. Is the site of reasonable cost for the use?

10. Will there be support among the following interested parties for use/acquisition of the sites for recreation or athletic facilities?

    - o Town officials
    - o Town residents
    - o Site owners
    - o Adjacent owners or occupants

IV. SITE EVALUATION: NEW RECREATION FACILITIES ON THE TOWN COMMON

Physical Suitability

1. Site Size

The Common is of ample size to accommodate some additional passive recreational facilities.

2. Environmental Issues

Wetlands - The Town Common has already been developed as an open space, there are no wetlands within the Common.

Hazardous materials - The Town Common has already been developed as an open space, there are no hazardous materials within the Common.

Prime agricultural land - The Town Common has been in continuous use as a Common for many years, therefore there would be no finding that it was a agricultural resource.

Historic or archaeological remains - The Common itself would be considered an historic resource. Therefore, if State or Federal funds are used to develop additional uses on the Common, they would have to be reviewed by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

3. Physical suitability

The site is very well suited to the addition of passive recreation facilities.

4. Estimated site development costs

Unknown until a specific program of improvements is developed.

Relationship to Adjacent Land Uses

5. Land use compatibility

The site would continue to be used for activities very similar to those it presently accommodates. The provision of additional facilities would enhance the site and the entire Town Common area.

6. Proximity to users

The site is centrally located for a wide variety of potential users including Town residents in general, Senior Citizens, participants in programs at the 4th of

July Building, Town employees and other users of the civic and religious facilities in the Town Common area.

7. Safe access for users

The Common is already used for recreational activities and has reasonable access from the surrounding ares.

Availability of the Site

8. Site availability

The site is owned by the Town and would be readily available for improvements.

9. Site cost

No site acquisition costs would be incurred.

10. Support for use/acquisition

Town officials - Likely to be very positive.

Town residents - Likely to be very positive.

Adjacent owners or occupants - Likely to be very positive.

V. SITE EVALUATION: RECREATION FACILITIES ON THE SWAIN SCHOOL SITE

Physical Suitability

1. Site Size

The Swain School site is of resonable size to accommodate some recreational facilities. A site layout and a facility program will need to be developed to determine the specific facilities which are appropriate.

2. Environmental Issues

Wetlands - The Swain School site does not contain wetlands.

Hazardous materials - The Swain School site is unlikely to contain hazardous materials, but as noted in the discussion of the Town Hall, a 21E investigation would be needed prior to any construction.

Prime agricultural land - The Swain School site does not include any prime agricultural land.

Historic or archaeological remains - The Swain School site may be considered a contributing asset to the potential Historic District. Therefore development of the site should include consideration of impacts on the district. No archaeological remains are anticipated to be found on the site.

3. Physical suitability

The site is well suited to the addition of passive recreation facilities.

4. Estimated site development costs

Unknown until a specific program of improvements is developed.

Relationship to Adjacent Land Uses

5. Land use compatibility

The provision of recreational facilities on this site would enhance the site, the (possible) Town Hall and the entire Town Common area.

6. Proximity to users

The site is centrally located for a wide variety of potential users including Town residents in general, Senior Citizens, participants in programs at the 4th of July Building, Town employees and other users of the civic and religious facilities in the Town Common area.

7. Safe access for users

The site has very good access to the Senior Center and the 4th of July Building, as well as reasonable access from the surrounding area as a whole.

Availability of the Site

8. Site availability

The site is owned by the Town and would be readily available for improvements.

9. Site cost

No site acquisition costs would be incurred.

10. Support for use/acquisition

Town officials - Likely to be very positive.

Town residents - Likely to be very positive.

Adjacent owners or occupants - Likely to be very positive.

VI. SITE EVALUATION: RECREATION FACILITIES IN THE WETLANDS ALONG THE IPSWICH RIVER

Physical Suitability

1. Site Size

A significant land area falls within the general heading of wetlands along the Ipswich River. In order to determine the feasibility of developing a two to three mile trail in this area further detailed site investigations will be required. See Figure 8 for illustration of a trail approximately one mile in length.

2. Environmental Issues

Wetlands - The entire site is likely to lie within wetlands. Consultation with the Conservation Commission and with relevant state and federal agencies will be needed to determine the feasibilty of building a trail, and the permits which would be required to do so.

Hazardous materials - The presence of hazardous materials is unknown. A 21E investigation would be needed prior to design and construction.

Prime agricultural land - Due to the very wet land, it is not likely to include any prime agricultural land.

Historic or archaeological remains - None anticipated.

3. Physical suitability

The site may be appropriate to the provision of a trail system. Further site investigation should be carried out to confirm this opinion.

4. Estimated site development costs

Unknown until a specific program of improvements is developed.

Relationship to Adjacent Land Uses

5. Land use compatibility

The provision of a trail system is likely to be compatible with the mixture of public and private residential uses which abut the area. As specific design studies are undertaken, careful attention should be given to the proximity of a trail to private yards and homes, security of trail users, and safety issues with respect to vehicular traffic.

6. Proximity to users

The site is centrally located in the Town, and is immediately adjacent to the High School. Therefore it could serve the dual purpose of a cross country trail for High School athletics and a running/walking/skiing trail for Town residents.

7. Safe access for users

The site has very good access to the High School, and is well located for access from the Town as a whole.

Availability of the Site

8. Site availability

The site has a variety of owners, and individual discussions would need to be held concerning access rights and/or land acquisition. A substantial portion of the land is owned by the Town of Wilmington.

9. Site cost

Unknown.

10. Support for use/acquisition

Town officials - Likely to be positive if costs are reasonable.

Town residents - Likely to be positive if costs are reasonable.

Site owners - Unknown.

Adjacent owners or occupants - Likely to be positive if reasonable buffers between public access areas and private use areas are provided.

VII. SITE EVALUATION: RECREATION FACILITIES ON THE PROPERTY BEHIND THE BAPTIST CHURCH AND THE LIBRARY

Physical Suitability

1. Site Size

This area is of ample size to accommodate the development of a skating pond and walking paths.

2. Environmental Issues

Wetlands - The area has existing wetlands, any development of the area for recreational use would respect these wetlands, and enhance their open space value.

Hazardous materials - It is not known if any hazardous materials would be found in this area. If the Town decides to pursue the use of this site, a detailed survey for hazardous materials should be carried out by a consultant experienced in the 21E process.

Prime agricultural land - Due to the very wet land, the area is not likely to include any prime agricultural land.

Historic or archaeological remains - No remains are anticipated to be found on this site.

3. Physical suitability

The site is very well suited to the addition of passive recreation facilities.

4. Estimated site development costs

Unknown until a specific program of improvements is developed.

Relationship to Adjacent Land Uses

5. Land use compatibility

The use of this site for recreational facilities would be compatible with adjacent land uses, and would make good use of an area that is unsuited to other types of use.

6. Proximity to users

The site is centrally located for a wide variety of potential users including Town residents in general, high school students, Town employees and other users of the civic and religious facilities in the Town Common area.

7. Safe access for users

The area is easily accessible to the public and is in immediate proximity to other public uses.

Availability of the Site

8. Site availability

The site is partially owned by the Town and partially by the Baptist Church. Use of the privately owned portion has been discussed over the years, and it is likely that an agreement could be reached with the Church.

9. Site cost

Unknown whether any acquisition costs would be incurred.

10. Support for use/acquisition

Town officials - Likely to be positive.

Town residents - Likely to be positive.

Adjacent owners or occupants - Likely to be positive.

VIII. SITE EVALUATION: ATHLETIC FACILITIES ON PRIVATE PROPERTIES ADJACENT TO THE HIGH SCHOOL

Physical Suitability

1. Site Size

From initial investigations it appears that the site can accommodate two or three soccer fields (a soccer field was used as a basic size criteria to insure that a variety of sports could be accommodated by the field) without encroaching on wetlands. In addition the site is of adequate size to support ancillary uses such as spectator stands. A practice field which might accommodate such uses as archery, javelin and discus might also be accommodated. See Figure 8 for an illustration of where these facilities might be located.

This land, in combination with the existing high school fields, the land behind the Baptist Church and the Library, and town-owned conservation land around the Ipswich River, could also accommodate a cross-country trail approximately one mile in length.

The exact dimensions of the site and the boundaries of wetlands would need to be surveyed in order to develop accurate site plans and to determine the precise dimensions of the facilities which the site could accommodate.

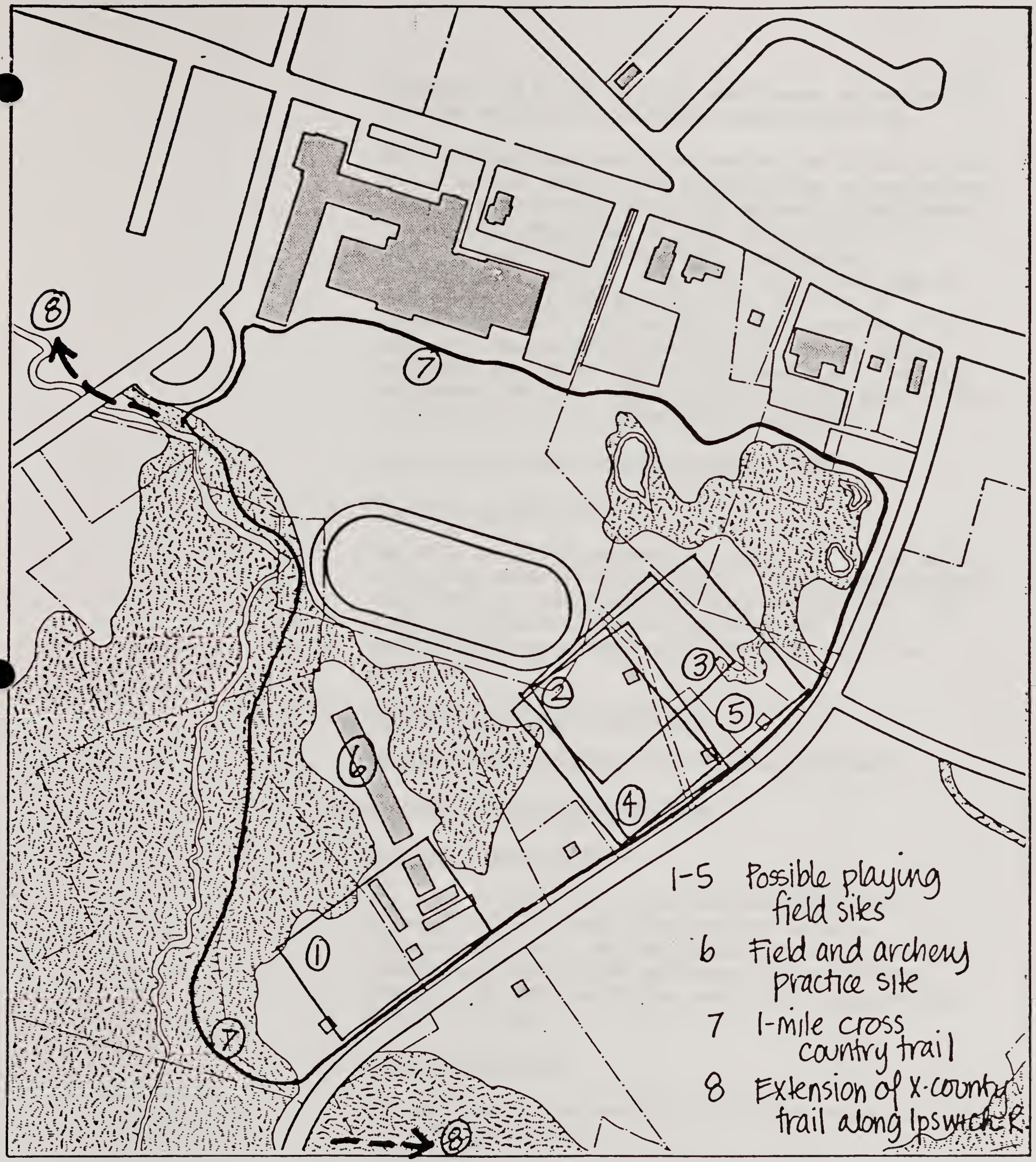
2. Environmental Issues

Wetlands - There are significant wetlands on the site, but it appears that there is adequate area to allow creation of athletic fields without encroachment on wetlands (this statement is based on the quality of information available at this time).

The regulations governing the filling of wetlands are rigorous, and do not allow filling of any more than 5,000 square feet in total. If the Town decides to pursue the use of this site, a detailed survey and wetland mapping of the site should be carried out.

Hazardous materials - It appears that there has been some dumping of household refuse on the site over the years, but it is not known if this would contain any hazardous materials. If the Town decides to pursue the use of this site, a detailed survey for hazardous materials should be carried out by a consultant experienced in the 21E process.

Prime agricultural land - Two soil types classified as "farmland soils of state and local importance" are found on the site, no soils identified as "prime



Athletic Facilities on Private Properties Adjacent to the High School

Figure 8

farmland" are on the site. A small area, approximately .7 acres in size, is in active agricultural use.

If state funds are sought to develop facilities on this site a written request for determination of application under Executive Order 193 would be made to the Bureau of Land Use, Department of Food and Agriculture (Safford House- Old Common Road, Landcaster, Massachusetts 01523). The State would then make a determination of the importance of the site as agricultural land. Since only a small portion of the site is in agricultural use the State would likely determine that it is not in the State's best interest to protect the site. This is particularly true if the proposed use is for recreational facilities.

Historic or archaeological remains - None

3. Physical suitability

The site is varied in terrain, some of it being quite hilly, and some it fairly level. There is fairly dense treecover on a substantial portion of the site. In order to construct playing fields on the site substantial tree cutting and re-grading would be required.

4. Estimated cost of construction

Unknown until more detailed plans are developed.

Relationship to Adjacent Land Uses

5. Land use compatibility

The site is adjacent to the existing High School playing fields. Other adjacent uses include conservation lands, Wildwood Cemetery across Wildwood Avenue, and one private residence across Wildwood Avenue. Athletic facilities would be an appropriate use for the site.

6. Proximity to users

The site is very convenient to the High School and its athletic facilities.

7. Safe access for users

The site is immediately adjacent to the High School and there are no streets between it and the School, therefore access is safe and convenient.

Availability of the Site

8. Site availability

The site is held privately by six different owners. The Town has not approached the owners concerning their long term plans for the properties, but there have been no indications that the owners are interested in selling their properties. Therefore, acquisition may require some substantial negotiations.

As shown on the Town's Tax Maps and verified by the Town Engineer, there is a twelve-foot wide Town owned right-of-way running through parcel 63-3A owned by Frank and Dorthy Frotten. It is not known how this small piece of Town owned property will affect the potential cost of acquisition.

9. Assessed value

The 1988 Wilmington Assessor's value of the seven parcels which comprise the area are noted below. An appraisal would be required for any subsequent action by the Town.

Parcel #	Owner	Assessed Value
63-1	Pilla	$238,300
63-2	Luongo	$229,800
63-2B	Jackson	$117,400
63-3	O'Reilly	$157,500
63-3A	Frotten	$205,100
63-3B	Murphy	$144,300
63-3C	Murphy	$99,300

10. Support for use/acquisition

Town officials - Town officials have expressed the belief that due to the deficiencies in physical education and athletic facilities at the High School, it is important to provide additional facilities in close proximity to the High School.

Town residents - As the users of the facilities it is expected that Town residents would be interested in additional fields. The cost of the facilities may deter some residents from supporting the acquisition of new land.

Site owners - Unknown

Adjacent owners or occupants - Unknown.

IX. SITE EVALUATION: MINOR ADDITION TO THE EXISTING PLAYING FIELD ATHLETIC FACILITIES

Physical Suitability

1. Site Size

This area is being investigated as an addition to the existing playing field. As expressed by the Athletic Director, any addition to this field would be helpful.

2. Environmental Issues

Wetlands - The area is adjacent to wetlands. The limit of the wetlands have been tagged by an engineering firm, and when mapping is finalized, it will be possible to decribe exactly how much land area is available without any encroachment on the wetlands (see Figure 9).

Hazardous materials - It is unlikely that there are any hazardous materials on this small site that does not appear to have had any prior use, but a survey should be prepared prior to the acquisition of the property.

Prime agricultural land - None

Historic or archaeological remains - None

3. Physical suitability

The site slopes toward a small pond and would need regrading and fill. However, it is a relatively small area, and presents the only option for adding to the existing playing field.

4. Estimated cost of construction

Unknown until more detailed plans are developed.

Relationship to Adjacent Land Uses

5. Land use compatibility

The site directly abuts the existing High School playing field and lies to the rear of the Baptist Church parking lot. The use of this small area as an addition to the playing field is an appropriate use for the site.

6. Proximity to users

The site is very convenient to the High School and its athletic facilities.

Figure 9

Map to be provided by
Harold Gillam

7. Safe access for users

The site is immediately adjacent to the High School, access is safe and convenient.

Availability of the Site

8. Site availability

The site is owned by the Baptist Church, but no use is presently made of the site. The Town Manager has informed the Church of the Town's potential interest in this small piece of property.

9. Site cost

The price of the land is unknown. The land comprises a small area landlocked between the High School field and an area of wetland.

10. Support for use/acquisition

Town officials - Town officials suggested that this small addition to the field would be very useful, and specifically asked that it be investigated in some detail.

Town residents - It is expected that Town residents would be supportive of this small project to add to the existing playing field.

Site owners - Unknown, but not likely to be very controversial.

Adjacent owners or occupants - Likely to be comfortable with this small addition.

X. SITE EVALUATION: ST. THOMAS'S CHURCH ATHLETIC FACILITIES

Physical Suitability

1. Site size

From initial investigations it appears that the site can fairly easily accommodate a soccer field.

2. Environmental issues

Wetlands - There are no wetlands on the site

Hazardous materials - From a cursory look at the site it seems unlikely that there would be hazardous materials on site. If the Town decides to pursue the use of this site, a detailed survey for hazardous materials should be carried out by a consultant experienced in the 21E process. Even under a lease arrangement, the Town would be responsible for any hazardous materials discovered if the site were being developed by the Town.

Prime agricultural land - May have some soil types defined as of "state and local importance." However, the site is small and is not in agricultural use, so is not likely to be of concern.

Historic or archaeological remains - None

3. Physical suitability

The site is fairly flat for most of its area, and rises toward a hill on its western side. From initial examination the site looks well suited to the development of a playing field.

4. Estimated construction costs

A ballpark estimate based on site clearing, grading, sodding and fencing (excluding site acquisition and any removal of hazardous materials) is $130,000 - $170,000.

Relationship to Adjacent Land Uses

5. Land use compatibility

The site lies entirely within Church property and therefore use of athletic facilities would have to be closely coordinated with Church activities. It is not an inappropriate use for such a site, but would have to be carefully reviewed with the Church. The site is fairly distant from other land uses, and appropriate

buffers between the site and adjacent residences would be developed as part of project design.

6. Proximity to users

The site is a 5-10 minute walk from the High School, which is probably the maximum distance that would be feasible for physical education classes or practice fields.

7. Safe access for users

Students would have to cross Route 62 and Middlesex Avenue to get to the site. While these roads are busy, they probably do not pose an unreasonable hazard to High School students. (Access to the student parking lot presently requires the same crossings to be made.)

Availability of the Site

8. Site availability

The Town Manager has informed the Church of the Town's possible interest in use of the site. Further discussions would need to occur if the Town decides to pusue this option.

9. Site cost

Unknown what the cost or conditions would be for use of the site.

3. Support for use/acquisition

Town officials - Thus far Town officials have expressed the belief that there is a serious shortage of athletic field capacity in the Town, and that it is important to provide additional facilities in close proximity to the High School.

Town residents - As the users of the facilities it is expected that Town residents would be interested in additional fields. Until the terms of any agreement with the Church are known it is not possible to assess the level of resident support.

Site owners - Unknown

Adjacent owners or occupants - Likely to be neutral.

XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recreational Facilities

There are several good options for providing additional recreational facilities in the Town Common area. Each of the four options discussed above should be considered in further detail. Based on budget availability, the timing of a decision on the Town Hall development, and public support for the different kinds of facilities, Town Officials could reasonably pursue all four opportunities over the coming years.

In terms of both ease of design and construction, and of project cost, the four might be undertaken in the following order:

1. Town Common improvements.

2. Recreation facilities on the Swain School site (in conjunction with the development of a Town Hall).

3. Development of the area behind the Baptist Church and Library.

4. Development of a trail in the Ipswich River area.

Athletic Facilities

There are no easy solutions to the need for additional athletic facilities for the High School. Each of the three options has both advantages and drawbacks. The recommendations for proceeding are as follows.

Minor addition to the existing playing field The Town should actively pursue this opportunity and should take the following steps.

1. Complete the documentation of the wetlands by mapping the area as staked by IEP.

2. Continue conversations with the Baptist Church about acquisition of this small parcel.

3. Upon receiving positive feedback from the Church, set aside the funds to design the addition, buy the land and construct the field.

New playing fields on private property adjacent to the High School

This option presents the Town with the only opportunity to create additional playing fields directly adjacent to the High School property, and therefore should at least be discussed by Town officials and Town residents. The

development of this substantial area of new physical education and athletic facilities would greatly enhance the programmatic opportunities for Wilmington's High School students. With the creation of two or three new playing fields, adequate field conditions could be maintained, and many of the programs which must now occur off-site could take place at the High School. In combination with the land lying behind the Baptist Church and the Library, this area could become a major school and community open space resource.

However, several drawbacks need to be carefully considered during discussions of this opportunity.

1. The likely cost of site acquisition.

2. The costs of site development (which need investigation in greater detail than is possible under the present contract). Specific tasks which would need to be carried out to insure that a reasonable cost estimate could be made include a detailed site topographic survey, wetlands mapping and a 21E investigation.

3. The possible community reaction to Town acquisition of private land (if the owners are not interested in selling the land).

St. Thomas's Church

While the site is further from the High School than the two others under consideration, it certainly presents the Town with a reasonable opportunity to create an additional playing field which is within walking distance of the High School. If High School officials conclude that the site represents a reasonable option for High School physical education uses, its use should be pursued further by the Town.

Once it has been determined that the Church is willing to consider such an arrangement, the Town should invest in a more detailed design study to arrive at an accurate cost estimate and engage in more detailed negotiations with the Church about operating and management arrangements for the use of the site.

CHAPTER 5
PROVISION OF EXPANSION AREA FOR WILDWOOD CEMETERY

Wildwood Cemetery, located off Wildwood Avenue approximately one-quarter mile from the Town Common, is Wilmington's town-owned cemetery.

The Town is actively pursuing the last addition to the cemetery which can be accommodated within the town-owned site. According to recent (July, 1988) information prepared by the engineering firm of Fay, Spofford & Thorndike, Inc. for the wetlands filing for this addition to the cemetery:

> ...Wildwood Cemetery is decreasing the available supply of grave sites (through sale) at a rate of approximately 130 sites per year. As now designed, the Wildwood Cemetery has approximately 1,400 unsold grave sites or about 11 years of grave sites left to be sold at the present rate of sale.
>
> ...The net result of the current project is to create approximately 4,760 grave sites or an additional 36 years of sites at the current rate of sales.

As part of the Town Common Land Use Study, the feasibility of making use of one privately owned property for further cemetery expansion has been explored. The parcel is on Wildwood Avenue directly adjacent to the cemetery, and is owned by Jessie H. Hudson Fanjoy, Hilda H. Crescitell and Joseph Brown.

I. SITE CRITERIA

In order to evaluate the physical suitability of the site for cemetery expansion a set of site criteria were developed. These are as follows.

Physical Suitability

1. Is the site large enough to accommodate the use under consideration?

2. Are there potential environmental problems with the use of the site such as:

   - o Wetlands
   - o Hazardous materials
   - o Presence of prime agricultural land
   - o Historic or archaeological remains

3. Is the site physically suitable for the proposed development with respect to topography and soil conditions?

4. What are the estimated site development costs for the proposed use?

Relationship to Adjacent Land Uses

5. Is cemetery use compatible with the land uses which surround the sites?

6. Is the site in reasonable proximity to the existing cemetery?

7. Is there safe access to the site for its potential users?

Availability of the Site

8. Is the site available for use?

9. Is the site of reasonable cost for the use?

10. Will there be support among the following interested parties for use/acquisition of the sites for recreation or athletic facilities?

- o Town officials
- o Town residents
- o Site owners
- o Adjacent owners or occupants

II. SITE EVALUATION: "HUDSON" PROPERTY

Physical Suitability

1. Site Size

The property being considered is 8.5 acres in size. However, the area which is available for use (that which is not wetland) and is adjacent to the cemetery is approximately 70,000 square feet in size.

Based on very rough calculations, the number of grave sites which could be accommodated on the site (outside of all wetlands area) is approximately 1,000. At the present rate of sales of grave sites, this would add seven and one-half years of capacity to the cemetery.

2. Environmental Issues

Wetlands - There are significant wetlands on the site. As noted above, only 70,000 square feet of developable site area exists adjacent to the cemetery. The

regulations governing the filling of wetlands are very rigorous, and presently do not allow filling of any more than 5,000 square feet in total. If the Town decides to pursue the use of this site, a detailed survey and wetland mapping of the site should be carried out. The present cemetery expansion project (within the town-owned cemetery property) includes approximately 4,700 square feet of wetlands filling. The staff to the Conservation Commission can provide information about the process which must be followed in order to carry out this filling.

Hazardous materials - As it now appears, the site has been used for one single family dwelling. If the Town decides to pursue the use of this site, a detailed survey for hazardous materials should be carried out by a consultant experienced in the 21E process.

Prime agricultural land - May have some soil types defined as of "state and local importance." However, the site is small and is not in agricultural use, so is not likely to be of concern.

Historic or archaeological remains - None

3. Physical suitability

The portion of the site which is not wetland is fairly flat and appears suitable for use as a cemetery. There are some mature trees on the site which could be incorporated into a landscape design for the cemetery.

4. Estimated site development costs

Until a design is prepared these costs cannot be estimated.

Relationship to Adjacent Land Uses

5. Land use compatibility

On one side, the site is adjacent to the existing cemtery. On the other is a very large area of wetland. Cemetery expansion would be an appropriate use for the site.

6. Proximity to users

The site is directly contiguous to the existing cemetery, and therefore would offer good access to both cemetery maintenance crews and to visitors.

7. Safe access for users

The site is immediately adjacent to the cemetery and access is safe and convenient.

Availability of the Site

8. Site availability

The site is privately owned, and there has been no indication that the owner is interested in selling the property. Therefore, acquisition may not be completely straightforward.

9. Assessed value

The 1988 assessed value of the site, from the Wilmington Assessor's records, is $161,100. An appraisal would be required for any subsequent action by the Town.

10. Support for use/acquisition

Town officials - Town officials asked that the site be investigated because it is the only contiguous property to the cemetery which is potentially appropriate for expansion. No detailed discussion has occurred about undertaking the purchase of the property.

Town residents - Unknown.

Site owners - Unknown

Adjacent owners or occupants - No immediately adjacent owners or occupants.

CHAPTER 6
PARKING IN THE TOWN COMMON AREA

I. EXISTING CONDITIONS

Each of the public and institutional facilities in the Town Common area has a parking lot which serves its users. As a result of the many facilities which must accommodate rather large crowds, the Town Common area has a great many parking spaces. The use patterns for the various parking lots differ greatly, with some in use during regular working hours, and others used primarily on Sundays or in the evening. Current estimated parking supplies immediately around the Town Common are as follows.

Swain School - Used by High School students and by 4th of July Building occupants	250 spaces
High School - Used by employees	120 spaces
Library	45 spaces
Senior Center	28 spaces
Baptist Church	145 spaces
Wildwood Avenue Lot - Not used at present	60 spaces

II. PROPOSED MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES

If the parking resources in the Town Common area can be better used by the various people who wish to park in the area, several benefits can be obtained.

- Reduction in the amount of land area devoted to parking, and improved visual quality around the Town Common.

- Opening up the Swain School site for its development as a Town Hall and for recreation facilities.

- Safer access from parking area for High School students (eliminate crossing of Route 62 and Middlesex Avenue between parking area and High School).

In order to accomplish these benefits the following use of parking resources should be explored.

1. Shift High School student parking to two existing lots; a portion of the Baptist Church lot, and the Wildwood Avenue lot. Approximately 100 student cars could be parked in the Church lot while 45 spaces could be maintained for Church use at all times. Sixty cars could be parked in the Wildwood Avenue lot.

At the present time 70 - 75 student permits are issued for parking. The provision of 160 spaces for High School student use therefore seems ample.

2. Remove much of the parking from the Swain School site and redesign and landscape the parking area needed to serve the Town Hall and the 4th of July Building.

3. For peak parking needs (such as the 4th of July Celebration, Town Meeting and major athletic events at the High School) develop a coordinated system which allows the public to make use of the Church parking lots in the vicinity of the Town Common.

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